



DISASTER NEWS

Economic Injury Loans for Small Businesses

Release Date: February 25, 2006

Release Number: WA 10347 & 10350-01

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Disaster Assistance Available for Small Businesses

Sacramento, CA- Small, non-farm businesses in 27 Washington counties, ten Oregon counties and three Idaho counties may now apply for low-interest disaster loans from the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA). These loans offset economic losses because of reduced revenues to farmers and ranchers due to adverse weather conditions, announced Alfred E. Judd, Director of SBA's Disaster Field Operations Center - West.

Small businesses in the following primary and neighboring counties may apply for economic losses that are attributable to the following incident dates and adverse weather conditions:

Small businesses in the Washington counties of **Benton, Clark, Columbia, Cowlitz, Douglas, Franklin, Garfield, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Skamania, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, Whitman and Yakima** may apply for these loans due to the drought beginning January 1, 2005. Small businesses in the neighboring Washington counties of Adams, Asotin, Chelan, Ferry, Grant, King, Lewis, Okanogan, Pacific, Pierce, Spokane and Stevens, the neighboring Oregon counties of Clatsop, Columbia, Gilliam, Hood River, Morrow, Multnomah, Sherman, Umatilla, Wallowa and Wasco; and the neighboring Idaho counties of Benewah, Latah and Nez Perce are also eligible to apply.

Small businesses in **Pacific** County may apply for these loans due to the hail storm occurring on September 9, 2005. Small businesses in the neighboring counties of **Grays Harbor, Lewis and Wahkiakum** are also eligible to apply.

Small businesses may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) of up to \$1.5 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred. "Eligibility for these loans is based on the financial impact of the disaster only and not on any actual property damage. These loans have an interest rate of 4%, a maximum term of 30 years, and are restricted to small businesses without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship," Judd said.

By law, SBA makes EIDLs available when the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture designates an agricultural disaster. Secretary Mike Johanns declared this disaster at the request of Governor Christine Gregoire.

Businesses primarily engaged in farming or ranching are ineligible for SBA disaster assistance. Agricultural enterprises should contact the Farm Services Agency (FSA) about the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) assistance made available by the Secretary's declaration. However, in drought disasters nurseries are eligible for SBA disaster assistance.

For information and application forms call toll-free **(800) 659-2955**, or visit SBA's website at www.sba.gov/disaster. Hearing impaired individuals may call **(800) 877-8339**. Mail completed applications to the U.S. Small Business Administration at 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The deadline to apply for these loans is **September 11, 2006**.

For more information visit SBA's website at www.sba.gov/disaster.

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